



Leicester, Monday Nov. 4, 1850.

My dear Sir,

I have foreborne to trouble you with any reply to your letter of the 28th ult^o, on account of the severe illness in your family to which you allude, and which I learned with sincere regret. But I have ~~constantly~~ felt, so strongly, that my entire silence would subject me to ~~mis-~~^{mis-}understanding, that I have concluded to write a ~~very~~ few lines, begging that you will feel under no ~~necessity~~^{obligation even to read} of attending to, ~~even reading~~ them at present, if the situation of your family forbids. I write chiefly ~~for the purpose~~^{to} of correcting an error, and pointing out one or two things which appear to me not to stand, in your mind, as they should do.

First, however, let me thank you for the candid disposition you manifest towards myself, and ^{towards} the Anti-Slavery Society. I have never thought, and I do not now fear, that you will do ~~us~~^{us} any intentional injustice.

Secondly, I am very sorry that anything in my letter had the savour of severity towards yourself, if such was your understanding; for I only intended to speak plainly. ~~It was not intended.~~ There is a class of religionists & "Sabbath-keepers" towards whom I cannot spare severity; I do not include you among them.

Thirdly, In referring to my quotation of your words, that our Agents lectured "sometimes against the usual observance of the Sabbath", you say

to me; "in quoting them, you emphasize the word against, while I should emphasize the word usual, and no other". Here is the error I ~~wished~~^{would} to correct. It was not I, but yourself, who placed the emphasis; I only quoted ~~you~~ exactly as you had written. You emphasized "against", and did not emphasize "usual", or any other word in the clause. Your letter, now before me, shows this. - I do not think this ~~very~~ important, save as you ~~seemed to~~ think that I ~~had taken~~^{took} the liberty, in quoting your language, ~~of putting~~^{to put} the emphasis where I thought proper.

Fourthly. I confess I do not now understand wherein you object to our Sunday Antislavery meetings, or our method of conducting them; because you say "my ^{I grow} view of the facts is not changed by your statements." It appeared ~~to me~~ that we were charged with "speaking against the usual observance of the Sabbath" in our Antislavery meetings; or, as it appears from your last letter, with "~~with~~" speaking against the usual observance of the Sabbath." To this I replied that if you meant ~~(as I did not suppose)~~ that we ~~pronounced~~^{denounced} the observance of the Sabbath by pro-slavery men, ~~the~~ apologists for Slavery on biblical & Christian grounds, I admitted the charge. I argued that there was nothing censurable in our doing^{so}; and you will not censure us, because you say you do yourself frequently condemn the hypocrisy & worthlessness of much that passes for Sunday observance. If, on the other hand, you meant that we spoke against anything good in the usual observance of ~~the~~ Sunday, ^{then} speaking

with the ^{help} ~~advantage~~ of long observation, I declared ^{I declare} the charge wholly without foundation, & made under an entire misapprehension of the facts in the case. - I can only ^{account for} explain the objection to our meetings, on the ground that we are thought to be wrong in meeting at all on that day. If that is the ground, I maintain that the First Baptist Society in Providence has an equal right to complain of your meeting ^{on Sunday} during its hours of service, and you an equally good right to complain of them for meeting during your hours of service. For I re-affirm that we "preach the Gospel" - & far more truly & unpartially than is done in most of the pulpits of the land; and, in our country at least, we have not been accustomed to admit that any ~~one~~ had a prescriptive right to preach the Gospel, or call ~~an~~ assembly together for that purpose, to the exclusion of ~~any one else~~ ^{others}. If ^{the} ~~part~~ ^{& churches} ministers, generally kept Sunday "as do S. J. May, Pierpont, Stetson & others" you speak of, there would be little of the need ^{I demand,} that now exists, for ^{holding special} ~~getting up~~ meetings on Sunday in which ~~where~~ an anti-slavery Gospel ^{can} ~~could~~ be preached ^{I heard}. - That we encounter prejudice, opposition, & obloquy in doing all this, is very apparent, and could not have been otherwise than anticipated. But this is no new thing; - when has truth been faithfully applied to a Nation's iniquity, without arraying against itself all these forms of enmity? - Should we not be unworthy ~~to base~~, indeed, if such considerations as these could hold us back?

Fifthly. A few words as to your Postscript, in which you speak of the fact, named to you by Mr. Hall, that the Bristol people have been

prominent helpers of our Antislavery Bazaar, & that that fact
gives an importance to what you said at Bristol that you had not
imagined. I hope you will not think ^{that we} I would have had you
withhold any true word, for such a reason. It ^{was} not the loss
of Bristol help to the Bazaar that was uppermost in my mind.
Good name, in man or woman, is the immediate jewel. And
surely we should lose it, & ought to lose it, in the estimate of all our
friends abroad, if we could take the ~~via~~ funds, contributed by them
to aid in the overthrow of slavery, & appropriate them to any other
object, however good. That your words, and the impression they
conveyed, been true and just to us (I repeat that I attribute not a
shadow of wrong intention ~~to you~~), I would not ~~have~~ and could not
have said a word in the matter.

I am, very truly, Yours

(Signed) Saml May Jr

To Rev. E. B. Hall, D.D.

Dr. Hall wrote

Ms. B. 1. 6